

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 IO-13 ISO-00 STRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 SS-15 STR-04
ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01
/093 W

-----031736Z 005946 /41

P R 031605Z MAR 77
FM USDEL MTN GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2286
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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PASS AGRICULTURE AND STR ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, NTN, EAGR, CO
SUBJECT: U.S. AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIONS WITH COLOMBIA

REF: 76 MTN GENEVA 3958

1. SUMMARY. ON MARCH 1 MTN DEL HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH COLOMBIAN MTN DEL ON COLOMBIA'S NOTIFICATION AGAINST THE U.S. (REFTLE) UNDER "OTHER PRODUCTS" PROCEDURES OF GROUP AGRICULTURE. COLOMBIA'S MAIN INTEREST IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IS TO OBTAIN IMPROVED MARKET ACCESS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS OF CURRENT AND POTENTIAL EXPORT INTEREST TO COLOMBIA NOTIFIED IN THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP, THE SUBGROUP ON QR'S, AND IN THE AGRICUTRUAL GROUP. COLOMBIA SEEKS THE BOUND ELIMINATION OR MAXIMUM REDUCTIONS OF TARIFFS AND INTENDS TO INDICATE LATER THEIR SPECIFIC REQUESTS CONCERNING NTM PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED ON PRODUCTS NOTIFIED. COLOMBIAN DEL INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE CONCESSIONS
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ON INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE CONCESSIONS THEY SEEK ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS. END SUMMARY.

2. COLOMBIAN DEL (LEON) AGREED WITH U.S. DEL (KOENIG) THAT PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION WAS THE INITIATION OF AN ONGOING EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON PRODUCTS OF CURRENT AND

POTENTIAL TRADE INTEREST TO COLOMBIA AND ON BROADER MTN AGRICULTURAL ISSUES. COLOMBIAN DEL STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO COLOMBIA'S ECONOMY, ESPECIALLY OF EXPORTS TO THE U.S. AND INDICATED COLOMBIA'S WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE, IF NECESSARY, CONCESSIONS ON INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS TO PRESERVE AND EXPAND THEIR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS. THE COLOMBIAN DEL ASKED IF THE U.S. WERE WILLING IN GROUP AGRICULTURE TO NEGOTIATE TARIFFS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, TO CONSOLIDATE DUTY FREE RATE GRANTED UNDER U.S. GSP SCHEMES AND TO CONSIDER SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT -- AND WHAT FORM THIS MIGHT TAKE.

3. U.S. RESPONDED THAT IT IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS TARIFF REDUCTION OF INTEREST TO COLOMBIA (EXCEPT GSP) ON BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ITEMS UNDER THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE MTN TARIFFS GROUP. THE U.S. CONSIDERS GSP IS A UNILATERAL NON-NEGOTIABLE GRANT, WHICH IS OUTSIDE THE MTN. THE U.S. ADHERES TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIATED TREATMENT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, BUT AT THIS STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE FORM THIS MIGHT TAKE WITH RESPECT TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN THE ABSENCE OF AGREED PROCEDURES IN THE MTN FUNCTIONAL GROUPS.

4. ON THE SPECIFIC PRODUCTS NOTIFIED, COLOMBIA, INTER ALIA, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

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A. COLOMBIA'S INTEREST IN ITEMS SUBJECT TO SEASONAL DUTIES (BEANS, FRESH GRAPES AND CANTALOUPE MELONS), IS TO SET SINGLE RATE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND BIND THE TARIFF AT ZERO RATE OF DUTY.

B. SOUGHT CONFIRMATION THAT U.S. DOES NOT APPLY ANY QR ON IMPORTS OF HONEY AND THE ELIMINATION OF THE 1 CENT/POUND SPECIFIC DUTY.

C. ASKED IN WHICH FORUM THE U.S. WOULD BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE MEASURES APPLIED BY THE U.S. ON IMPORTS OF RAW SUGAR, AN ITEM OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE TO COLOMBIA.

5. U.S. CONFIRMED THAT NO QUOTAS OR TARIFF QUOTAS ARE MAINTAINED ON THE IMPORTS OF HONEY INTO THE U.S., BUT NOTED U.S. PRODUCERS' CONCERNS OVER IMPORTS IN THE PAST, AND PROVIDED AN OVERVIEW OF THE SECTION 201 INVESTIGATION ON HONEY. WITH RESPECT TO SUGAR, U.S. NOTED THAT U.S. SUGAR POLICY IS UNDER REVIEW. FURTHER-

MORE, THE PREPARATIONS FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT, THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW SUGAR LEGISLATION, AND THE CONTINUING INQUIRY INTO SUGAR IMPORTS BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION WILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT BEARING ON U.S. COMMERCIAL POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO SUGAR.

6. U.S. DEL STRESSED NEED FOR COLOMBIA TO BE MORE SPECIFIC WITH RESPECT TO ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS ALLEGEDLY ENCOUNTERED BY COLOMBIA ON SUGAR SHIPMENTS TO THE U.S., AS WELL AS THE ALLEGED HEALTH AND SANITARY PROBLEMS RELATIVE TO CANTALOUPE MELONS.

7. COLOMBIAN DEL TOOK NOTE OF ABOVE POINTS AND UNDER-TOOK TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION FROM GOC. IN ANSWER TO U.S. QUESTION, COLOMBIAN DEL WAS NOT IN POSITION TO STATE WHETHER GOC WOULD BE NOTIFYING ADDITIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRODUCTS UNDER GROUP AGRICULTURE PROCEDURES, BUT CONCURRED THAT REPORTING THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATIONS COULD BE LEFT UNTIL AFTER THE FOLLOW-UP CONSULTATIONS. WALKER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MTNGE01560
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770073-0877
Format: TEL
From: MTN GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770397/aaaadhqh.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0e0f38be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MTN GENEVA 3958
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3220171
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIONS WITH COLOMBIA
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, US, CO, MTN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0e0f38be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009